

Port Royal  
Frankford, Pennsylvania

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*Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings*  
PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of Pennsylvania

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Ralph W. Lear, District Officer  
311-312 Dime Bank Bldg., Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

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5120000

PORT ROYAL  
Frankford, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania

Date of Erection

1761

Builder

Edward Stiles

Present Owner

Martin Schultz

Number of Stories

Two story.

Present Condition

Very poor. Practically all detail has been removed.

Materials of Construction

Exterior construction is brick and stone. Roof is slate, covered with shingles. Flat roof is tin.

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## PORT ROYAL

Frankford, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania.

Port Royal was built by Edward Stiles in 1761.

Edward Stiles, born at Port Royal, Bermuda, probably between the years 1715 and 1720, subsequently settled in the Islands of New Providence of the Bahaman group, and afterward came to Philadelphia, where he engaged in mercantile shipping. His store was located on Front Street, between Market and Arch Streets.

Edward Stiles purchased, on August 6, 1761, from Richard Waln of Oxford Township; Philadelphia yeoman, and Robert Waln, Philadelphia merchant, a messuage and tract of one hundred and thirteen acres and twenty perches, consisting of seventy four acres, three roods and fourteen perches of upland, and thirty-eight acres, one rood and six perches of meadowland, which was part of a larger tract of two hundred and sixty seven acres, formerly called "Enhaker".

Mr. Stiles gave the name of Port Royal to the tract purchased by him, after the name of his birthplace. It was located between the present Tacony Street and Frankford Creek, and extended from a line East of Tucker Street to a line West of Church Street in what was then Oxford Township; now the twenty-third ward of Philadelphia. The lane or avenue leading to the house, then on the property, extended in a southeasterly direction from what is now Tacony Street along the westernmost line of the property, and is now marked by a diagonal line of trees on the easternmost end of the Waln estate.

What is said to have been the original farm house of Port Royal plantation has been altered into two brick houses which are located south of Pierce Street, and west of Orthodox Street. The farm house was, at one time, surrounded by

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birch and buttonwood trees, and had in front of it, a grass plot sloping down to the wharf on the Frankford Creek. The proximity of the house to the Creek and its great distance from any street, seems to indicate that it had been built at a very early date, probably before the Port Royal mansion.

Soon after the purchase of Port Royal plantation by Edward Stiles, he erected a fine Colonial brick mansion now standing on the south side of Tacony Street, between Church and Duncan Streets. On the first floor of the mansion is a wide hall, extending the entire depth of the house with a large drawing room on the right, and on the left, a sitting room, staircase and dining room. It originally had a basement kitchen, after the style of many mansions of Colonial days; but the Lukens family, who subsequently owned it, altered this, and built a kitchen on the floor with the dining room. This property was one of the country seats of Mr. Stiles. He, later in 1799, purchased another country seat known as "Green Hill" upon a portion of which, his grandson, Benjamin Stiles erected a house in 1842. This later was purchased by Oscar Hammerstein, and upon this site, was the Hammerstein Opera House.

During the occupation of Philadelphia by the British Army in the fall of 1777 and 1778, Frankford and vicinity did not escape the depredations of the contending armies. This was particularly true of Port Royal plantation. The premises were plundered of all the valuable furniture and provisions, a coach, chariot, horses and eight or ten negroes.

Edward Stiles was twice married. There was only one child, James, by the first wife. Edward was a member of Christ Church, Philadelphia, and is said to be buried with his two wives in the burial ground.

By his will dated September 16, 1793, and proven at Philadelphia, February 24, 1804, he directed that his slaves be freed and educated at his expense. He also left legacies to his brothers and sisters and to the Port Royal (Bermuda) church. The residue of his estate he bequeathed and devised to his son, James; however, he having died previous to the

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death of his father, the estate vested in the children of James.

In 1811, Stephen Duncan married a daughter of James, and in 1816, purchased Port Royal plantation from Benjamin Stiles, son of James, but sold it in 1833 to Stephen Duncan of Mississippi, who, in December 1852, sold it to Benjamin Stiles. Stephen Duncan married a second time.

The Port Royal mansion had been occupied since 1846 by Rev. Charles Lukens, at one time a teacher in the Germantown Academy. He taught a private day and boarding school and the boarding pupils were accommodated with apartments in the mansion. Upon the purchase of the farm by Benjamin Stiles, he caused a notice to be served December 22, 1852 upon Mr. Lukens, to vacate the premises upon the expiration of the lease. Arrangements were made, however, whereby Mr. Lukens on March 30, 1853, became the owner of the mansion, building and grounds located between Tacony and Stiles Streets and west of Duncan Street. Some other portions of Port Royal came into possession of the Lukens family at a later date; while most of the farm was sold to various other persons.

Mr. Charles Lukens conveyed the mansion and grounds to his son, George W. Lukens, who died March 16, 1899; and by his will devised the mansion and grounds unto the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania Free and Accepted Masons, for a Masonic home, Hospital, or Dispensary, upon the payment of certain annuities, and in the case of refusal by the Lodge to accept the devise within a certain time, it was then devised to the Rector Church of Warden and Vestrymen of St Mark's Episcopal Church of Frankford, to be used for church purposes and for the benefit of the poor of the parish; upon the payment, however, of said annuities. The Lodge and the Church both declined to accept the devise, so that the property still belonged to Mr. Luken's Estate until several years ago.

The mansion is now unoccupied, except for the rear wing, which is occupied by the present owner, Martin Schultz and his family.

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The exterior construction of Port Royal is brick and stone. The pitch roof is slate, covered with shingles; French type. The flat roof is tin.

The building is in a very poor state of preservation, and is in great danger of being torn down. All doors, windows, stair rails, trim, base, cornices, and mantels have been removed. The quoins on the front of the building have also been taken away.

Historic information obtained from: "Papers Read Before the Historical Society of Frankford-'Port Royal'"

Author... *Bettie Paul Murrey*  
Approved... *Ralph W. Davis*  
Date... *June, 1937*